

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00
ICAE-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00
NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 PC-01 OMB-01
TRSE-00 /085 W
-----030427 061150Z /53

O R 061108Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY ACCRA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4401
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 5401

LONDON FOR SEITZ

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, GH
SUBJ: CHANGES IN GHANA GOVERNMENT - COMMENT

REF: A) ACCRA 5378; B) ACCRA 5369; C) ACCRA 5349

1. THUS FAR GENERAL ACHEAMPONG'S SUDDEN DEPARTURE
AND CHANGES IN SMC HAVE PRODUCED VIRTUALLY NO PUBLIC
REACTION. LOW KEY METHOD OF ANNOUNCING IT WAS CLEARLY
DESIGNED TO KEEP THE CALM AND INSURE A SMOOTH
TRANSITION. BORDER WITH TOGO HAS BEEN CLOSED, BUT WE
ASSUME THIS IS MERELY A PRECAUTIONARY MEASURE AND
WILL BE BRIEF. PUBLIC STATEMENTS IMPLY THAT ACHEAMPONG
RESIGNED VOLUNTARILY IN "INTEREST OF THE UNITY AND
STABILITY OF THE NATION." EMBASSY INFORMED HOWEVER
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THAT DECISION WAS OBVIOUSLY FORCED AND THAT ACHEAMPONG
IS NOW BEING DETAINED "COMFORTABLY" WITH HIS FAMILY
SOMEWHERE OUTSIDE ACCRA. HE IS BEING DENIED ANY
MEANS OF COMMUNICATION.

2. RELIABLE SOURCES INDICATE THAT THE PALACE COUP
WAS LED BY GEN. AKUFFO AND ENGINEERED ENTIRELY

WITHIN SMC. TO DATE ESSENTIALLY THE SAME GROUP OF OFFICERS AS BEFORE CONTINUES TO RUN GHANA, WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF ACHEAMPONG. AS FAR AS WE CAN ASCERTAIN THE PROFESSIONALS AND OTHER OPPONENTS OF THE PREVIOUS REGIME PLAYED NO PART IN THE ACTION. NEVERTHELESS, THE CONTINUOUSLY CRUMBLING ECONOMIC SITUATION AND GROWING PUBLIC DISAFFECTION CLEARLY WERE KEY FACTORS IN FORCING THE CHANGE. WE HEAR FROM ONE SOURCE THAT AT LEAST SOME OPPOSITION ELEMENTS ARE PLEASED AT THE DEVELOPMENT AND HOPE THAT IT WILL LEAD TO DESPERATELY NEEDED CHANGES IN ECONOMIC/FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN WHETHER GEN. AKUFFO WILL GRASP THE OPPORTUNITY.

3. GEN AKUFFO IS A SANDHURST GRADUATE AND HAS RECEIVED SUBSEQUENT SPECIALIZED MILITARY TRAINING IN THE U.K. HE IS CONSIDERED WESTERN ORIENTED AND PRO-BRITISH IN PARTICULAR. WE WOULD EXPECT HIS ADMINISTRATION TO BE FRIENDLY TOWARD THE WEST. IN FACT WE HAVE HEARD FROM A SOURCE DIRECTLY INVOLVED IN THE RECENT CHANGES THAT THE NEW GOVERNMENT PLANS TO SEND A HIGH LEVEL MISSION TO THE UNITED STATES IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO ASK FOR U.S. UNDERSTANDING, AS WELL AS MORAL SUPPORT AND, MOST LIKELY, FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.

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4. EMBASSY PRESUMES THAT IN VIEW OF THE WAY IN WHICH THE CHANGE WAS EFFECTED, THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION OF NEW GOVERNMENT DOES NOT ARISE. REQUEST CONFIRMATION.
HOLMES

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NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REORGANIZATIONS, PERSONNEL MOVEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 jul 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978ACCRA05401
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780277-0286
Format: TEL
From: ACCRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780793/aaaadabe.tel
Line Count: 99
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9ef6fb7a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 ACCRA 5378, 78 ACCRA 5369, 78 ACCRA 5349
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2110564
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHANGES IN GHANA GOVERNMENT - COMMENT
TAGS: PGOV, GH, SUPREME MILITARY COUNCIL
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbs://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9ef6fb7a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014